

REMARKS

By this Amendment, claims 1-23 are cancelled, claims 24-45 are added. Thus, claims 24-45 are active in the application. Reexamination and reconsideration of the application are respectfully requested.

The specification and abstract have been carefully reviewed and revised in order to correct grammatical and idiomatic errors in order to aid the Examiner in further consideration of the application. The amendments to the specification and abstract are incorporated in the attached substitute specification and abstract. No new matter has been added.

Also attached hereto is a marked-up version of the substitute specification and abstract illustrating the changes made to the original specification and abstract.

In item 1 on page 2 of the Office Action, claims 5, 12 and 13 were objected for the identified informalities. This objection is believed to be moot in view of the cancellation of claims 5, 12 and 13. Furthermore, the Applicants respectfully submit that this objection is inapplicable to new claims 26 and 34, which have been added in favor of cancelled claim 13, because new claims 26 and 34 recite “the inquiry” instead of “a inquiry” in the “wherein” clause (line 4), as kindly suggested by the Examiner.

The Applicants thank the Examiner for kindly indicating, in item 4 on page 5 of the Office Action, that claims 5-10 and 16-20 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form to include all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claim.

New claim 24 includes the limitations originally recited in cancelled claims 1, 15 and 16. New claim 32 includes the limitations originally recited in cancelled claims 1 and 9. New claim 42 includes the limitations originally recited in cancelled claims 1 and 10.

Accordingly, in view of the Examiner’s assertion that claims 9-10 and 16 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form to include the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claim, the Applicants respectfully submit that new claims 24, 32 and 42, as well as new claims 25-31 and 33-41 which depend therefrom, are clearly in condition for allowance.

New claim 43 recites the apparatus of cancelled claim 21, new claim 44 recites the program of cancelled claim 22, and new claim 45 recites the recording medium of cancelled claim 23. New claims 43-45 have each been amended by including the limitations of new claim 24, i.e., the limitations originally recited in cancelled claims 15 and 16.

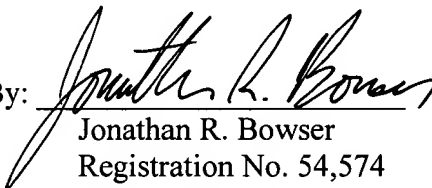
Accordingly, the Applicants respectfully submit that new claims 43-45 are also clearly in condition for allowance by including similar limitations to those of new claim 24, which is allowable for the reasons mentioned above.

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, it is respectfully submitted that the present application is clearly in condition for allowance. An early notice thereof is respectfully solicited.

If, after reviewing this Amendment, the Examiner feels there are any issues remaining which must be resolved before the application can be passed to issue, the Examiner is respectfully requested to contact the undersigned by telephone in order to resolve such issues.

Respectfully submitted,

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